

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

Annual Subscription: \$3.00

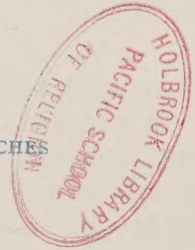
17, ROUTE DE MALAGNOU, GENEVA
297 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 10

Printed in the U. S. A.

Tel.: GRamercy 5-3475 — Cable Address: "Worcil"

under the auspices of

the WORLD COUNCIL of CHURCHES (in process of formation)
the INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL
the WORLD ALLIANCE for INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES
the WORLD ALLIANCE of YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
the WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
the WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION
the WORLD COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



The aim of the Ecumenical Press Service is to keep its readers informed of trends of thought and opinion in and about the Churches and Christian movements. It is therefore not to be held responsible for opinions expressed in its news items.

No. 11

Fifteenth Year

March 19, 1948

Amsterdam Special

Radio, Film and Press at the Assembly

From every indication at this writing, the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches when it meets in Amsterdam - August 22, to September 4, - will be widely publicised. Applications from both the secular and religious press for representation at Amsterdam are being received at the Geneva office. The publicity committee for the Assembly, headed by Mr. Charles Taft, is sparing no effort in preparing for adequate press arrangements at this international church assembly.

By radio, news of the Assembly will be carried daily around the world. Voices of outstanding church leaders will be heard in different languages over the air.

In order that those in attendance may have in printed form the outstanding features of that gathering, six issues of a "Delegates Digest" will be printed, and made available in English, German and French.

A daily bulletin will keep the Assembly members informed as to all details necessary for the smooth running of such a conference.

The script for a 16m. sound film of the Assembly is now being prepared. The film will be done professionally - copies will cost approximately \$50 and will be available 4 to 6 weeks after the Assembly. Orders are being received at Geneva and later at Amsterdam.

A display exhibition of the history and work of the World Council of Churches is being developed and will be shown in the Concertgebouw.

Enquiries concerning radio, films, press and other publicity matters can be addressed to: Dr Frederick E. Reissig, Public Relations Officer, World Council of Churches, 17 route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland. E.P.S.Geneva

Call to Prayer for the Amsterdam
Assembly

This week a Call to Prayer has been sent out to the 136 member-Churches of the World Council of Churches. The Call is signed by the five Presidents of the World Council, namely Pastor Marc Boegner, the Archbishops of Canterbury, Upsala and Thyateira, and Dr John R. Mott. It calls all Christians to earnest and constant prayer for the first Assembly, and suggests that prayer should especially be offered on Whit Sunday, with its special associations for the unity and re-vitalisation of the Church.

E.P.S. Geneva

Bishop Stephen Neill's Impressions of Asia

In an article published by "The Record" (London, March 12, 1948) Bishop Stephen Neill who is journeying in Asia on behalf of the World Council of Churches and of the International Missionary Council, writes as follows:

"I wonder how many people in Europe have a right understanding of the revolution that has taken place in Asia in the last forty years". "If the European was feared because he was strong, admired because he was clever, and trusted because he was believed to be honest", now "in the East the West has lost its opportunity of domination. With the decline of Western influence has gone a reawakening of the spirit of the East... Western civilisation is no longer regarded as civilisation at all".

"Asia is resolutely determined that never again will it commit the determination of its destinies to European hands... It wants to stand on its own feet, to make its own mistakes and to find its own paths... Many say with great resolution they would rather have their own chaos than our order. This vigorous spirit of self-determination is not incompatible with friendliness towards representatives of the Western races, and with a recognition that the East still has much that it can usefully learn from the West. But it does involve a radical recasting of all relationships, on a basis from which the East will never again be willing to depart.

"A frank recognition of this changed attitude is necessary to think rightly about missionary work in the new phase that is opening out.

"I asked an outstanding Chinese Christian leader, 'Do you still feel that you can use the foreign missionary in your Christian enterprise?' He thought for a moment and then answered, 'Yes, but not all. We have to be sure that he is of the kind that will fit in with our plans'... This is a significant utterance. It is 'our plans'. The Chinese are to work out the plan; it is their judgment of what needs to be done that is to determine the situation. Within that situation the foreigner is welcome to come and to share his gifts with the Chinese..." For the moment everyone agrees that the help of the foreign missionary is still needed, especially in the training programme. "First of all in the training of the ordained ministry; next in the lay training programmes for men and women in the Church. The cry everywhere is for better leadership. The feeling is that older methods have not given the Church the leadership it needs if it is to hold its own in the modern situation and to grow into full manhood..."

E.P.S. Geneva

UNITED STATESMissionary Programme of Advance

A comprehensive overseas programme was outlined to the representatives of 118 Protestant mission boards for the annual meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America held at Buck Hill Falls on March 8.

Many of the proposals were described as imparting a "new look" to foreign missions. These included suggestions for a far wider use of radio, motion pictures and other audio-visual aids in preaching; cooperation with governments and other agencies in public health programmes; extension of literary projects; development of trained mission experts in the fields of agriculture and science, and the use of psychologic and psychiatric examinations in recruiting missionary personnel. Other proposals recommended immediate training of at least 1000 new missionaries for rural rehabilitation work in Asia, development of day nurseries and mothers' clinics in mission territory, and a "revitalised" approach to the problem of youth.

If all the recommendations were acceded to by the Mission boards the Churches would more than double their yearly expenditures for missionary work in the next decade. The present "Programme" will be considered by each denomination represented in the Conference. In October, in Columbus, it will be formally "unveiled" in its final form before a mass gathering of 4,500 Protestant Church and mission leaders.

The Programme of Advance, said the Rev. Dr Wynn C. Fairfield, General Secretary of the Foreign Missions Conference, "should not be construed as a North American enterprise only, but as North America's share in a world enterprise". E.P.S. Geneva

CHINAConditions of Missionary Work

The following comments on conditions in China have been sent by observers in China.

The evacuation of missionaries from North China;- During the past few weeks, large numbers of missionaries have left parts of north and central China and some have been cut off and isolated in certain cities. In a few cases, missionaries have been killed.

The fact that Communists control so much territory north of the Yangtse combined with incidents involving looting of property and some loss of life, has resulted in action by the embassies. Advice has been given to missionaries and other foreigners that it would be wise to withdraw from the area east of Hupeh and north of the Yangtse. The reason for such advice being given is that it is not possible for the Nanking government to afford protection in the area indicated, and nowadays foreign governments cannot do anything for their nationals in China, so far as protection is concerned.

In many parts of north and central China, missionaries had been forced to leave before official advice was given. In some cases, Chinese colleagues asked missionaries to leave as their presence made their own position more difficult. However, conditions vary in different areas and many missionaries plan to remain where they are, even if Communists take over.

Can Christian work continue in Communist areas?:- Until a few weeks ago most responsible Christians felt that there was insufficient evidence to enable them to answer this question. During the autumn of 1947 many first hand reports have been received which indicate that in most parts of North China where Communists really exercise control, the Church is unable to carry on. On the other hand in some places public worship is allowed, and in some cases Christian institutions are even encouraged to continue.

When any given area first comes under Communist occupation, with or without fighting, Christians, whether Chinese or foreign, are not usually molested. But when the Communist political organisers arrive, the Church is rarely allowed freedom. Sometimes the church building is used for some public purpose. Individual Christians are often singled out for continued examination, and the result may be loss of land and livelihood, sometimes torture and in not a few cases Christians have been put to death, because they have refused to give up their Christian faith.

E.P.S. Geneva

The Programme of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey

The Ecumenical Institute at Bossey announces the following courses and conferences:

- A meeting for men and women in industry (March 25-30)
- The second Conference of Leaders of Laymen's Institutes (April 1-6)
- The second Course for Christian Youth Leaders (April 22-May 14)
- A Conference of Political Leaders (June 2-5)
- A Course for Pastors on the Assembly Themes (June 8-30)
- A Course for Theological Students on the Assembly Themes (July 5-23)
- A Conference of University Teachers - under the auspices of the World's Student Christian Federation (July 27-August 2)
- Second Conference for Educationalists (August 5-13)
- Second Conference for the Medical Profession (August 23-29)
- Meeting of Leaders from Younger and Older Churches (September 12-19)
- General Course on "The Laymen's Responsibility in the Renewal of the Church" (October 15-December 15)

Address all enquiries to: The Ecumenical Institute, Château de Bossey, Céligny, Switzerland.

E.P.S. Geneva

EGYPT

Ecumenical Visitor among German Prisoners of War

Dr Reinold von Thadden (who is now representing the Foreign Office of the German Evangelical Church at the World Council of Churches in Geneva), has just visited the camps for German prisoners of war in Egypt and Cyrenaika, on behalf of the Ecumenical Commission for Prisoners of War. During the four weeks that he stayed in British Territory in the Middle East, he took greetings from Germany and from the World Council to his countrymen in the camps, and also discussed with them the many difficulties which await them in Germany on their return. This Spring especially, when it seems probable that the German prisoners in North Africa will speedily be released and repatriated, it was very important to give a word of encouragement to these soldiers who have been completely cut off from the

has resulted in such conditions in Germany as to make it impossible for the German people to make any contribution to the world. During the autumn of 1947 many first hand reports have been received which indicate that in most parts of North China where Communists really exercise control, the Church is unable to carry on. On the other hand in some places public worship is allowed, and in some cases Christian institutions are even encouraged to continue.

When any place even tries to carry on with Christian work, it is usually with or without the blessing of the Government, whether Chinese or foreign, and is usually subjected to the same kind of official repression which the Church is usually allowed to enjoy. Sometimes the Church is used for some public purpose, but it is often used for the opposite purpose, and the result can be loss of faith and livelihood, sometimes even death, and in not a few cases Christians have been put to death, because they have refused to give up their Christian faith.

The Program of the Evangelical Institute at Berlin

The Evangelical Institute at Berlin announces the following courses and conferences:

A meeting for the purpose of preparing for the Berlin Conference (April 1-6)

The second Berlin Conference for the purpose of preparing for the Berlin Conference (April 1-6)

A Conference of Political Leaders (June 1-5)

A Conference for the purpose of preparing for the Berlin Conference (July 1-5)

A Conference of University Teachers - under the auspices of the World's Student Christian Federation (July 21-August 2)

Second Conference for the purpose of preparing for the Berlin Conference (August 23-25)

Second Conference for the purpose of preparing for the Berlin Conference (September 13-15)

Meeting of Leaders from Younger and Older Churches (September 13-15)

General Assembly of the Evangelical Church in Germany (October 13-December 13)

Address all enquiries to: The Evangelical Institute, Berlin at Hesse, Germany, Switzerland.

Dr. Reinhold von Thadden (who is now representing the German Council of the German Evangelical Church at the World Council of Churches in Geneva), has just visited the camps for German prisoners of war in Egypt and Syria, and has reported to the German Council for Prisoners of War. During the four weeks that he stayed in British territory in the Middle East, he took part in many meetings and also in the World Council of Churches in the Middle East, and also discussed with them the many difficulties which await them in Germany on their return. This Spring especially when it seems probable that the German prisoners in North Africa will be repatriated, it is probable that the German prisoners in North Africa will be repatriated to their homes and will be able to contribute to the world of tomorrow.

world for so long and so often disappointed, and to tell them something about the general political and economic situation.

During his stay Dr von Thadden visited the Theological College in Camp 380 on the Bitter Lake, and spent some time with the German chaplains and church-assistants in the Suez Canal Zone. Altogether he spoke indirectly to about 25,000 to 30,000 Germans.

The British authorities had generously arranged transport for Dr van Thadden by car and military plane. The organisation of the lectures, discussions and divine services was in the hands of the British army clergy in the Middle East General Headquarters. At the end of his visit Dr van Thadden had the opportunity of giving his impressions, observations and political ideas to the General commanding the British troops in Egypt and Malta, in confidential personal interviews.

E.P.S. Geneva

EGYPT

Dr von Thadden Visits Eastern Church Leaders

While Dr Reinold von Thadden was travelling through the British Territory on the Suez Canal and in Cyrenaika, he had an opportunity of getting into touch with the Churches of the East in Cairo, on behalf of the World Council of Churches. He was able to discuss with them the preparations for the Assembly in Amsterdam.

In order to make a general discussion possible, a meeting was arranged on March 5, in Cairo at the house of the Right Rev. Geoffrey Allan, the Anglican Bishop of Cairo. Representatives were present from the following Churches: the Coptic Patriarchal Church, the Greek Orthodox Church in Egypt, the United Coptic Catholic Patriarchal Church, the United Greek Catholic Church, the Armenian Gregorian Church, the Church of England and the members of some American Free Churches.

One gratifying result of these discussions was that Dr von Thadden was granted an audience by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria and by the Patriarch of the Coptic Church. The latter definitely agreed to send a representative of the Coptic Church to the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam - a question which had been doubtful. The possibility of sending an alternate was also considered.

E.P.S. Geneva

TURKEY

The Turkish Government Restores a Building to the Ecumenical Patriarchate

The Turkish Government has at last restored to the Ecumenical Patriarchate the building on Halki island, near Istanbul, in which the Greek Orthodox seminary is housed. Efforts to regain possession of the property were initiated by church leaders almost immediately after its confiscation during the Graeco-Turkish war, over twenty years ago.

E.P.S. Geneva

UNITED STATES

Religion in Public Schools

An important decision has been taken by the Supreme Court in Washington, ruling that public school systems may not be used to assist religious groups in giving religious instruction. The decision was passed by 8 votes to 1. EPS. Geneva

GERMANYThe Problem of De-Nazification

The recent pastoral letter of Pastor Niemöller, President of the Church of Hessen-Nassau, concerning de-Nazification addressed to all the pastors in his Church, has immediately been followed up by declarations on the same subject from Protestant Bishops in the British and American Zones. These various expressions of opinion have created excitement which has not yet completely subsided, not only among the Occupying Powers but also among the German political parties and the German public.

Similar steps have just been taken with regard to the French Authorities. General Koenig, French Commander-in-Chief in Germany, received a delegation on February 27, consisting of the Bishops and Presidents of the Protestant Churches in the French Zone. This delegation was led by Bishop Wurm and introduced by Chaplain General Sturm. It explained to the Commander-in-Chief some delicate questions raised through the internment camps and through the problem of de-Nazification in general.

During the course of the conversation, which was marked by complete freedom and mutual understanding, General Koenig was able to assure his interlocutors that the process of de-Nazification will soon come to an end, and that certain measures have already been stopped, which will enable the task to be brought to a satisfactory close, while legislation will give the internees every desirable guarantee. Certain aspects of the problem, to which attention was drawn by the delegation, are to receive thorough investigation. There is therefore reason to hope that a satisfactory solution will soon have been found for this delicate problem.

E.P.S. Geneva

UNITED STATESA 24 Hour Financial Appeal by Radio

By means of a nation-wide radio broadcast an estimated 10,000,000 persons in the United States heard a "Million Dollar Sermon" preached by the Right Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill, presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church. In an effort to raise that million dollar in twenty-four hours for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, Dr Sherrill took to the airways in a ten-minute exhortation to answer "a Macedonian cry from our Christian brethren". The appeal was broadcast over 600 stations of the Mutual Broadcasting System.

"This help", said Bishop Sherrill, "has nothing to do with rebuilding destroyed churches with their shattered stained glass windows and broken arches. We are helping only to maintain the barest necessities which make possible the continued spiritual life of these churches amid most disheartening and even desperate conditions. Here, then, is a Macedonian cry from our Christian brethren".

A spokesman for the campaign said that responses to the appeal received throughout the day indicated a "tremendous" success.

E.P.S. Geneva

GREAT BRITAIN250th Anniversary of the S.P.C.K.

Founders' Day, celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was observed on March 9, 1948 at a meeting in Mansion House, London. The Archbishop of Canterbury outlined the Society's new policy of concentration and specialisation in its work at home and overseas.

The Society will continue to promote colleges for training Christian teachers of the Church overseas. It will increase its scholarship and bursaries for pupils in schools and theological colleges in all parts of the Anglican Church overseas, as well as increase its production of books and all kinds of teaching aids. Another task will be the spiritual care of emigrants now going overseas.

E.P.S. Geneva

U.S.S.R.

The Andronius Monastery now a State Monument

In Moscow there are many examples of old Russian architecture. One of these is the Andronius Monastery, a 15th century fortress. The monastery includes a whole group of buildings, and is one of the treasures of old Russian architecture. The walls of the church, which is of white stone, are decorated with frescoes painted by the great Russian painter, Andrej Rubliw. He and many statesmen of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries lie buried in the church and cemetery of the monastery, together with heroes of the war of 1812. The Andronius monastery has now been declared a state monument, in honour of Andrej Rubliw. The work of restoration has begun.

E.P.S. Geneva

GERMANY

The Youth Department of the E.K.D.

The first meeting of the Youth Department of the Evangelical Church in Germany was held on February 9, at Hanover. Its President is Dr Manfred Müller, who recently had a serious motor accident. The attitude of the Youth Department to the cultural, social and political Youth Associations was discussed. It was decided:

- "1) that Protestant youth is called by Jesus Christ through the Christian message, and is enlisted in His service;
- 2) it is a member of the Evangelical Church in Germany, and therefore different from the other youth organisations;
- 3) owing to its task, the Evangelical Church has the duty and the right to preach the Christian message to all young people. Without any regard for social or political differences, it calls young people to be obedient to God in all the questions of life. By so doing it bears witness to the freedom and the dignity of mankind. Only in this way can it do its best work among our people;
- 4) the community life of Protestant youth assumes different forms. But it has only one task, which is to serve the Christian message."

In a series of publications called "Protestant Youth", the first volume of which "On Spiritual Care" is to appear shortly, the burning questions of the day are discussed.

In order to cooperate more closely with the Free Churches, it was decided to ask them to send a representative to the Youth Department, where he would have a seat and a vote.

E.P.S. Geneva

JAPAN:- A Council of Cooperation for Christian Work in Japan has been formed in Tokyo. It comprises an equal number of representatives from the Church of Christ in Japan and the National Christian Education Association and seeks to promote co-operative work between the Church of Christ in Japan and eight North American Churches.

E.P.S. Geneva

